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FACT SHEET

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF IMMIGRATION JUDGE (OCIJ)

The Office of the Chief Immigration Judge is headed by the Chief Immigration Judge, who establishes operating policies for the Immigration Courts and oversees policy implementation in each of those courts with the help of 2 Deputy Chief Immigration Judges and 9 Assistant Chief Immigration Judges. OCIJ supervises and directs the activities of the Immigration Courts, which handle more than 250,000 immigration matters annually. OCIJ provides overall program direction, articulates policies and procedures, and establishes priorities for more than 220 Immigration Judges located in 52 Immigration Courts throughout the Nation.

Immigration Judges are responsible for conducting judicial proceedings and act independently in their decision-making capacity; their decisions are administratively final, unless appealed or certified to the Board of Immigration Appeals. The Judges conduct hearings concerning the removal of illegal aliens throughout the United States. Through its Criminal Alien Institutional Hearing Program, OCIJ currently has programs coordinated and in place in all 50 states, including Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, selected municipalities, and Federal Bureau of Prison facilities to adjudicate the immigration status of alien inmates incarcerated by Federal, State, and municipal correctional authorities as a result of convictions for criminal offenses.

Biographical Information

Michael J. Creppy, Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Creppy was appointed as the Chief Immigration Judge on May 1, 1994. He received his B.A. from Fisk University in 1975, his J.D. from Howard University School of Law in 1978, and his LL.M. from Georgetown Law Center in 1979. Prior to his appointment as Chief Immigration Judge, Judge Creppy worked for 13 years in numerous positions with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) -- from 1988 to 1994, in the Office of the General Counsel as deputy general counsel for litigation; from 1986 to 1988, as associate general counsel primarily focusing on the employer sanctions and anti-discrimination provisions of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA); from 1984 to 1986, as chief legal officer for the INS district office in Los Angeles; from 1983 to 1984, as a trial attorney with the Office of Immigration Litigation, Civil Division; and from 1981 to 1983, as a trial attorney for the INS district office in New York, NY. Prior to joining the Department of Justice, Judge Creppy served from 1979 to 1981 as a judicial law clerk for the Superior Court for the District of Columbia. He has lectured extensively and authored many articles in the immigration field. Moreover, he has been the recipient of numerous awards, such as the

Younger Federal Bar Award where he was honored as one of the top five litigators in government. He is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

H. Jere Armstrong, Deputy Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Armstrong has been Deputy Chief Immigration Judge since April 1997. Prior to that time, he was an Assistant Chief Immigration Judge from July 1986 until April 1997 and counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge from August 1984 to July 1986. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Alabama in 1964, and Juris Doctorate from the University of Alabama School of Law in 1966. Prior to joining OCIJ, Judge Armstrong served 20 years in the Judge Advocate General's Corps of the U.S. Army where he retired as a Colonel with numerous meritorious honors and awards. He is a member of several professional organizations including the Alabama State Bar Association, the Virginia State Bar Association, the District of Columbia Bar Association, the Federal Bar Association, and the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. Judge Armstrong has also authored articles which have appeared in the Georgetown Immigration Law Journal and The Army Lawyer.

Thomas L. Pullen, Deputy Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Pullen was detailed to the position of Assistant Director for the Office of Planning and Analysis in May 2000 and returned to the Office of the Chief Immigration Judge in October 2001. He was appointed Deputy Chief Immigration Judge in April 1997. Prior to that, he served as Assistant Chief Immigration Judge from May 1990 until his appointment in April 1997. He completed his undergraduate work at Western Illinois University in 1965, and received his Juris Doctorate from John Marshall Law School in 1968. From 1982 to 1990, Judge Pullen served as an immigration judge with the Chicago Immigration Court. Prior to that experience, he worked for the Immigration and Naturalization Service as a trial attorney in Chicago. Judge Pullen has been a member of the Illinois Bar since 1969.

David W. Crosland, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Crosland was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in June 2000. Prior to this appointment, he served as Immigration Judge at the Immigration Court in Otay Mesa, California, from May 1997 to June 2000. He received his B.S. from Auburn University in 1959, and his J.D. from the University of Alabama in 1966. From 1981 to 1987, Judge Crosland practiced immigration law in Washington, DC, as a partner first with the law firm of Ober, Kaler, Grimes & Shriver and later with the law firm of Crosland, Strand, Freeman & Mayock. He served as general counsel and acting commissioner for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Washington, DC, from 1977 to 1981. Judge Crosland served as adjunct professor of law at George Washington School of Law in 1997 and the District of Columbia School of Law from 1990 to 1997. He is a member of the Alabama, Georgia, and District of Columbia Bars.

Larry R. Dean, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Dean was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in January 2000. Prior to this appointment, he served as an immigration judge at the Immigration Court in New York from January 1999 to December 1999. He received his B.S. in 1970 from the University of Southern Mississippi, and his J.D. in 1973 from Tulane University School of Law. Judge Dean served in the U.S. Army from 1973 to 1998 as an attorney and circuit judge at Fort Polk, Louisiana; Fort Carson, Colorado; The Judge Advocate General's School in Charlottesville, Virginia; Korea; Japan; Fort Lee, Virginia; and Fort Benning, Georgia. He is a member of the Mississippi and Louisiana Bars.

Daniel Echavarren, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Daniel Echavarren was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in February 2003. Prior to this appointment, he served in the Office of the General Counsel since his appointment in November 1995. He received his B.A. from the University of Maryland in 1974 and his law degree from Georgetown University in 1980. Mr. Echavarren worked as a senior trial attorney with the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Office of Special Counsel, from 1987 to 1995. Prior to joining the Office of Special Counsel, he worked for the Federal Bureau of Prisons in the areas of personnel, EEO, internal affairs, and labor law. Mr. Echavarren is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

Michael C. McGoings, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge McGoings was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in March 1995. He received his B.A. from Morgan State University in 1965, an M.S. from the University of Illinois in 1967, and a J.D. from Catholic University in 1973. Before his appointment as Assistant Chief Immigration Judge, he served for five years as chief of the enforcement division, and as associate general counsel in the headquarters office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Office of General Counsel. From 1987 to 1990, he worked as assistant general counsel focusing primarily on employer sanctions issues. He has taught and lectured extensively on employer sanctions and civil document fraud. Judge McGoings is a member of the Pennsylvania and District of Columbia Bars.

Brian M. O'Leary, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge O'Leary has been an Assistant Chief Immigration Judge since May 1994 and served as Acting Deputy Chief Immigration Judge from May 2000 to October 2001. He completed his undergraduate work at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in 1982, and received his Juris Doctorate in 1985 from the New England School of Law. Prior to joining OCIJ, Judge O'Leary worked for five years in numerous positions with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) Headquarters Office of the General Counsel where he served as assistant general counsel, associate general counsel, and deputy associate general counsel. Judge O'Leary also served with the U.S. Attorneys' Offices (Southern District of Florida and Eastern District of Virginia), where he worked as special assistant U.S. attorney. Prior to that experience, Judge O'Leary worked as a trial attorney with the INS Miami District Office. He is a member of the Massachusetts and Florida State Bars.

Robert P. Owens, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Owens was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in May 1994. He received his undergraduate degree from DC Teachers College in 1972, his Masters Degree from Federal City College in 1974, and his Juris Doctorate from Antioch School of Law in 1978. Before joining OCIJ, Judge Owens served for two years as assistant general counsel with the Immigration and Naturalization Service in the Office of the General Counsel. Prior to his serving with the Department of Justice, he worked in the District of Columbia government as assistant corporation counsel with the Office of the Corporation Counsel, and as a trial attorney with the People's Counsel. Prior to that time, Judge Owens worked as a regional attorney (Mid-Atlantic Region), with the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. He is a member of the District of Columbia Bar.

Gail B. Padgett, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Padgett was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in May 1996. She received her undergraduate work at Georgia State University in 1971, and her Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University Law Center in 1981. Before joining EOIR, Judge Padgett served in several capacities within the Department's Community Relations Service -- from 1989 to 1996, as associate director; from 1981 to 1989, as general counsel; and from 1977 to 1981, as special assistant to the Director. Judge Padgett has received several awards including the Attorney General's Distinguished Service Award. She is a member of the Virginia, Georgia and District of Columbia Bars.

Michael F. Rahill, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Rahill was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in April 1997. Before his appointment in April, he was a staff attorney on the Board of Immigration Appeals from 1995 to 1997, and counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge from 1994 to 1995. Judge Rahill received his B.A. from Boston College in 1968, and his J.D. from New York Law School in 1974. He received an M.S.L.S. in 1982 from The Catholic University of America. From 1988 to 1994, Judge Rahill served as assistant general counsel for the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in Washington, DC. From 1983 to 1988, he worked as an attorney advisor and tax librarian for the Tax Division, Department of Justice. Judge Rahill worked at the World Bank and International Monetary Fund from 1982 to 1983. From 1974 to 1982, he served as a trial attorney with the Antitrust Division, Department of Justice. Judge Rahill has served as an instructor in asylum law for INS and as an instructor in legal research at the University of Maryland and the Department of Justice. He is a member of the New Jersey Bar.

Phillip T. Williams, Assistant Chief Immigration Judge

Judge Williams was appointed Assistant Chief Immigration Judge in April 1997. He received his B.A. in 1978 from Temple University, his M.A. in 1981 from Howard University, and his J.D. from Howard University School of Law in 1986. Prior to joining OCIJ, from March 1995 to March 1997, Judge Williams was an immigration judge in New York. From 1987 to 1995, he was an attorney for Maggio & Kattar in Washington, DC. Judge Williams worked as a DC pre-trial services officer from 1984 to 1986. He is a member of the District of Columbia and Pennsylvania Bars.

Loreto S. Geisse, Counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge

Loreto S. Geisse was appointed Counsel to the Chief Immigration Judge on September 25, 2000. She received her undergraduate degree in 1989 from Washington University, and her Juris Doctorate in 1995 from Washington College of Law of the American University. From September 1997 to September 2000, Ms. Geisse served as a trial attorney with the Department of Justice, Civil Division, Office of Immigration Litigation. Ms. Geisse worked previously at EOIR as an attorney-advisor for the Chief Immigration Judge from September 1996 to September 1997. She first joined the Department of Justice through the Attorney General's Honor Program with EOIR in 1995 serving as a judicial law clerk for the immigration courts in Baltimore, Maryland; and Philadelphia and York, Pennsylvania. She is a member of the Maryland Bar.

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